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ABSTRACT

Vocational guidance counselors face a number of concerns as they try to develop career guidance and counseling programs. Because of changes in the workplace as a result of high technology, phrases such as work readiness, career maturity, and career adaptability are essential to the understanding of where a person is in the career decision-making process. The counselor must learn how to identify and measure readiness to learn, readiness to work, and decision-making abilities, and to provide occupational information. The process is complicated by the changing workplace. Counselors must adjust to new demands to incorporate new activities, testing, and methods of reaching individuals in their already existing job responsibilities. They must be flexible, learn new skills, and work with professionals in the community. (Following a nine-page report, excerpts are provided from reports of programs developed by Texas, Maryland, and Pennsylvania to address the above concerns. A description of one statewide innovative endeavor, the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program Model, follows. Endeavors on a nationwide basis are discussed in terms of activities of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee, and the National Consortium of State Career Guidance Supervisors. Forty-three endnotes are appended.) (YLB)

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VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE COUNSELORS TACKLE CHANGES IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

"What do you want to be when you grow up?"

The answer to this question is not quite as simple as it used to be. Historically, vocational counselors have assisted individuals with information about occupations and tried to match their interests with their aptitudes and abilities. Today's counselors, however, have had to shift gears and incorporate a broad range of career development activities into their programs. Career development activities include skill building in such areas as: problem-solving, team collaboration, decision-making, and employability skills development. These changes have come about as a result of requests from students and employers alike, to teach career development skills that are useful in a changing workplace.

While school systems and employers have vested interests in preparing a career mature workforce, a dilemma exists. Funding for the numbers of vocational counselors needed to realistically serve the career development needs of students is not available. Not only is there not money for greatly expanding the focus of vocational counselors, but all too often, current vocational counselors are asked to perform non-counseling activities. Administrative support roles such as discipline, scheduling, and attendance often fall to counselors in the absence of adequate money for administrative staff to perform these duties. The physical location of the counseling office is typically close to the administrative

suite of offices, making it easy for counselors to be asked to cover for administrators in their absence.

Another complication is that counselor training programs have emphasized personal and educational counseling and have spent little time on career counseling. This puts the current counselor at a disadvantage when employers are asking schools to better prepare students for a changing work environment.

The purpose of this paper is to document areas of concern facing vocational guidance counselors, review innovative programs developed by other states, and explore national efforts to formalize training for vocational guidance counselors. A literature review indicates basic problems concerning definitions and language used to describe career counseling which hinders communicating about, and understanding of the problem. In addition, rapidly changing characteristics of the learner, the workplace, and training programs place the vocational counselor in a dynamic and seemingly ever changing field. Attempts are being made nationally and within several states to address the changing roles and responsibilities of vocational counselors.

Definitions of Career Counseling. Donald Super, in a speech given at the 107th National Center for Leadership Development Seminar (1985), discussed "New Dimensions in Adult Vocational and Career Counseling." The concepts presented during that speech are worth noting to establish a common understanding of vocational and career counseling.

"A vocation is something a person wants to do to earn a living; a career is the sequence of things that a person does during the course of a lifetime, which includes preoccupational, occupational, avocational, and postoccupational roles -- all the positions that a person occupies. Occupations, trades, and professions exist independently of any person; vocations involve a relationship between a person and an occupation; careers are peculiarly personal in that only I can pursue my career and only you can follow yours."¹

Super depicts five career concepts. The first is the longitudinal conception in which the individual leaves formal schooling, gains progressive experience through the twenties and thirties, reaches peak performance in the forties, and glides through late middle age and old age until retirement. The second career concept reflects and takes into account personal as well as situational issues affecting individuals during the process of their career. Situational issues include school and college, the labor market, company policies and , in some cases, legislation. Personal issues include individual needs, values, interests, abilities, and achievements. Each of the sets of issues works simultaneously to influence an individual's alternatives and decisions. The third concept, the stability concept, defines conventional, stable, unstable, and multi-trial careers. Determination of any one of these four categories, depends on the socioeconomic and psychological background/experiences of individuals. The fourth example reflects the longitudinal and lateral aspects of careers and clarifies the use of time and space in a career. This is illustrated by dividing an individual's life into major life roles along an age continuum. The fifth concept divides an individual's life into stages of development illustrating the common methods of coping with developmental tasks. These stages include birth, growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, decline and death. The substages of developmental tasks include trial and transition (ages 14-25); achievement or frustration and consolidation (ages 25-45); innovation, stagnation or updating (ages 45-60); and deceleration (after 60).²

As a result of discussing these concepts of career development, the concept of career maturity and career adaptability become apparent. "Career maturity has been defined as readiness to cope with the developmental tasks appropriate to one's life stage."³

While career maturity seems appropriate when dealing with adolescence, "the facts of recycling and of discontinuity in adulthood have led recent theorizers and researchers (Super and Kidd, 1979; Super and Knasel, 1979) to use the term career adaptability."⁴ In working with adults the term "career adjustment" is important.

Learner Characteristics. "When vocational counselors meet with individuals, the focus tends to be on the resources the person has at their disposal to make a decision - health, family support, financial resources, motivation, intelligence, special aptitudes, educational attainments, experience, values, and interest."⁵ This tendency, while seemingly logical, assumes that students and some adults "are sufficiently mature vocationally for their traits to be stable, that they have been sufficiently exposed to the world of work to have a pattern of interests that can be meaningfully revealed or reflected in an inventory, and that they are ready to use the self knowledge provided by the assessment in making career decisions."⁶ Other issues that need to be considered include the ability to: "(a) ascertain the relative importance of the work and (b) ascertain the relative importance of their major roles in the life scheme of the individual."⁷ With this kind of information, the counselor can begin to measure work readiness of the learner. From this, decisions can be made regarding exploration.

Learner characteristics affecting work readiness range from individual skills and motivational levels to socioeconomic conditions, either encouraging or limiting alternatives for individuals. And, the attitudes and information that may be relevant to young people, may not be relative to blue-collar workers, miners, executives and/or housewives. The counselor's position then is to assess concrete information (i.e., basic skill levels) as well

as more subjective information about the individual, such as attitudes about work, advancement, retention, individual goals, and/or realistic goals, as they relate to the age of the learner.

Workplace Characteristics. The workplace is an ever-changing environment. Jobs are redesigned or eliminated. Technological changes affect the worker and the end product. While the quality of work life may change, becoming better or worse, the workers must be able to adapt and be willing to keep on learning.

The vocational counselor, particularly counselors of employment and training programs, must learn to adjust, adapt, and be open to assess individuals experiencing all kinds of emotional, psychological, and physical change while on the job. These changes may or may not be readily apparent to the counselor or the client.

Training Characteristics. The staff of training programs for individuals pursuing specific occupations have had to look at their overall purpose and end results. Because of rapidly changing technology, many skills being taught today may be obsolete by the time students, particularly secondary students, complete the full training program. Some skills, however, may only need to be adapted to be viable in the workplace.

While cost and time are major setbacks for training programs to maintain "cutting edge quality" programs, other more subtle changes within the training program can prepare students to succeed. Incorporating, not only technical understanding of skills, but using problem-solving and team collaboration teaching techniques will create a more workplace-like atmosphere.

The counselor's role is to support the concepts being taught and used throughout the training program, and to encourage the students to make decisions responsive to classroom activities and information being presented regarding career choices.

Counselor Characteristics. The days of sitting down with a student or an adult, reviewing lists of individual skills levels and occupational task needs, and making a vocational choice are becoming obsolete. The counselor must become an active participant in the decision-making process by enhancing the individual's self understanding of the world of work. Unfortunately, the amount of time this takes on an individual basis is overwhelming. Secondary school counselors often must deal with administrative duties such as scheduling, discipline, and filling in for administrators in their absence. When such administrative duties are required, the counselor loses flexibility of time for dealing with student needs. Postsecondary counselors often spend a great deal of time meeting the needs of special populations. While these special populations deserve their attention, "regular" adult students also need attention. Employment and training programs are providing more and more services, but these are often limited to counseling about jobs that are available in the community. No matter what level of counseling, the services must be accessible to the student. In order to reach more students, counselors must join forces with classroom teachers to encourage students to learn career development skills and make wise career decisions.

When asked how counselor education should be changed across America, Super responded,

I think a renewed emphasis on career development is important, because without it one attends only to the short-range problems. Guiding students to aim at a single occupation - 'my career' - in a world of constant change will not adequately equip

them to handle changes. Counselors need an understanding of economic and technological change in society in addition to an understanding of intellectual and personality change in individuals. I would have a greater emphasis on and better treatment of life stages and developmental tasks.⁸

Evaluation of Career Guidance Programs. "Evaluation of career guidance programs has recurred because the programs mean so much to so many, both societally and personally. Their effectiveness is a critical question on several levels -- policy determination, program implementation, and personal satisfaction and success."⁹ A study, by John O. Crites of Northwestern University, "cumulates the collective conclusions of previous reviews and extrapolates from past and present theory and research to extend beyond the conceptual framework to suggest new models and methods for evaluating career guidance programs, especially as they affect and influence the individual student."¹⁰ Recommendations from this study are:

1. Programs should be designed for the continuity of individual career development. A major disadvantage of examining the outcomes of various career interventions is that one often overlooks the total continuity of individual career development as a person progresses from one career stage to another. Too often, program developers feel they have done their job simply by completing the initial stages of developing career awareness, exploration, and decision-making. Additional assistance should be offered for the continuation of his/her development through subsequent stages through such activities as assisting with implementation of plans, the selection of education programs, and job placement and adjustment.
2. More emphasis should be placed on exploiting what activities work and in strengthening them to achieve optimum career guidance effects.
3. There is need to establish a larger number of highly-trained, institutionally supported and effective teams of guidance workers. These kinds of numbers will assure a more comprehensive delivery of guidance services to all students in all settings.
4. A comprehensive list of client competencies should be developed to provide program direction. The many studies reviewed in this report identify an impressive array of client objectives to be achieved by career guidance programs.

5. School- and agency-based career guidance activities should be more closely integrated with private sector experiences for clients, whenever feasible. A number of studies demonstrated the importance of real world experience in achieving career guidance objectives.
6. Programs should not rely solely on a few traditional techniques to achieve program goals. Programs should be expanded to include a variety of interrelated activities that systematically foster career development.
7. Career guidance activities that are too general or ambiguous should be avoided. Career guidance activities should include (1) clearly-stated objectives in terms of client outcome, (2) specific and meaningful client activities to achieve the objectives, and (3) a measure of assessing client achievement of the objectives.
8. Self-initiated, periodic evaluation of the degree to which career guidance programs are achieving their objectives should be conducted frequently. The activity can be quite effective in determining what works, what does not work, and in identifying program impediments.
9. Counselor education programs should be competency-based in order to insure that counselors acquire necessary skills to meet the full range of clients need.¹¹

The above recommendations for career guidance programs directly translate into the kinds of qualifications one might expect of the vocational counselor, which in turn could be incorporated into an overall system approach to provide quality vocational and career guidance. With these recommendations, however, may come more responsibilities for the counselor and, therefore, an administrative decision on the priorities of the counselor in conjunction with commonly accepted roles now.

For instance, if the first recommendation of assisting the student through job placement and adjustment was accepted, the counselor would need to be allotted more time and possibly more flexibility to coordinate efforts with employers. On the other hand, by using a comprehensive list of counselor competency requirements, some time may be saved

by the counselor in the assessment process. More highly trained guidance counselors who have achieved certain competencies would certainly benefit the student, the school and the community.

PROGRAMS FROM OTHER STATES

In the following excerpts from reports of programs other states have developed, the above mentioned concerns are addressed in program goals and activities. While these states do not reflect statewide systems of counselor education, parts of these programs could be used to develop an overall program.

Texas

In June of 1986, the Department of Occupational Education and Technology and the Division of Occupational and Vocational Education at North Texas State University submitted a final report to the Texas Education Agency. The purpose of the project, titled "Assessment of Vocational Guidance and Counseling Programs," was to assess the secondary vocational guidance and counseling programs in Texas in terms of role and function of vocational guidance and counseling personnel. The objectives were twofold: initially to assess the status, role and function of vocational guidance and counseling personnel; and secondly, to develop a handbook of appropriate professional vocational guidance and counseling information and practices which could serve as a model for vocational guidance and counseling personnel.¹²

The project consisted of developing survey instruments and then mailing them out to six specific groups in Texas: vocational administrators, vocational counselors, occupational investigation instructors, occupational exploration instructors, job placement personnel and vocational students. The survey covered over 295 districts and generated 1,586 combined responses from the six groups.¹³

The following is a summary of some of the findings, i.e., the roles of each of these six distinct groups within the Texas vocational guidance and counseling system.

Vocational Administrators. While administrators agreed that their responsibility was to take a leadership role in surveying area business and industry to ensure that vocational guidance and counseling programs offer services consistent with contemporary need, only approximately 8% actually did it. It was also stated that the administrator's position was to coordinate well-planned in-service programs for improvement of skills and information for vocational guidance staff.

Vocational Counselors. This particular group places value on advanced training in their field - 94% held master's degrees while 90.5% completed certification requirements. The vocational counselors administer and interpret vocational interest and aptitude tests, as well as formulate and implement educational programs to inform students about job placement services.

Occupational Investigation. These instructors provide students with observational experiences in the field. They are also responsible for follow-up of former students, as well

as coordinating with feeder schools for new students. Overall, the group felt the need to be more involved with business and industry.

Occupational Exploration. Instructors responsible for occupational exploration teach a one-semester course, using a self-developed course outline. Part of the class activities include class field trips to business and industrial settings. In order to coordinate class discussions and communications with business and industry, the instructor must maintain a working knowledge of business and industry needs. One criticism resulted: these professionals felt they had more than one supervisor. This group is also highly trained with 53.8% having a bachelor's degree and 46.2% having a master's degree.

Job Placement Coordinator. Job Placement Coordinators conduct interviews with potential school dropouts for placement purposes. Their role is also to verify the individual's assessment results and relate that to opportunities for employment. This group would like more time to spend with potential drop outs.

Student Survey. Over 97% of the students surveyed stated that learning skills such as problem-solving and decision-making have helped them feel better about themselves and feel that the information and experiences have helped to better prepare them for the world of work.¹⁴

These summaries briefly describe the roles of each of these professionals and the student response to their efforts. The report did not give a breakdown of the number of professionals per student population. It is significant, however, that they appear to be a

highly trained and highly successful group of vocational guidance and counseling professionals.

Maryland

This study, "High-Technology Careers: A Guide for Counselors," was developed for the Maryland State Department of Education by the Center for Occupational Research and Development in Waco, Texas, in 1984. Part of this study was intended to aid counselors by (1) providing occupational information about high-technology careers, and (2) providing background information about high technology and its potential impact on the entire occupational structure.¹⁵

"The high-technology era introduces particular challenges for guidance and counseling professionals. The counselor introduces students to decision-making skills that will enhance their capabilities to respond to change throughout their lives. In the fast-changing high-tech era, these skills are increasingly important."¹⁶

Maryland's Guidance Program Manual states their broad goal as "to ensure the development of educational and career decision-making skills for all students. "Sample objectives in the manual reflect the seriousness of the statement. "These objectives include: (1) to relate career options to their individual aptitudes, interests, and personal characteristics, (2) to relate different subjects to skills and knowledge required for specific occupations, and (3) to perform other activities to increase self-awareness and career awareness."¹⁷

Because high-technology careers undergo frequent changes, career guidance for high-technology fields presents a special challenge for counselors. Students are unlikely to have a vivid idea of actual tasks and environments of high-technology occupations.

As a result, they are not aware of the connection between their present interests and their school coursework, and the skills and knowledge required in a high-tech career. The counselor has to make special efforts to bring that connection to light for the student.¹⁸

The vocational counselor in Maryland has experienced expanded roles as well as change of emphasis as a result of this study on high-tech careers. The guidance counselor will now be responsible for: "(1) strengthening of decision-making skills needed to make career choices throughout a life-time of changes, (2) expanding the concept of career-planning to career/life-work planning, (3) strengthening of abilities to accommodate more information and greater choices in all areas, and (4) combining broad-based education with specialty skills/knowledge."¹⁹

Maryland has also realized that, oddly enough, high-technology may indeed free up some time for counselors to work one-on-one with students when appropriate. Computer-assisted guidance (CAG) is an umbrella term applied to a variety of computer-assisted systems that provide occupational information and/or career guidance. The core of most CAG systems is a database of information regarding occupations, employment outlook projections, financial aid opportunities, apprenticeships, and so forth. Students gain access to data in most CAG systems by specifying preferred job or career characteristics such as salary level, work values, location requirements, and social factors.²⁰

Pennsylvania

Shippensburg University submitted a final report to the Pennsylvania Department of Education in 1984 for a project titled "A Plan to Implement Six Regional Invitational

Counselor Preparation Workshops." This project was funded to "consider the professional development skills needed by counselors to function more effectively in area vocational-technical schools. In addition to considering the need for studying the state of the art of vocational counseling as it relates to counselor education, the committee also deemed it appropriate to consider the type of short-term training available to counselors who are already certified but need to update and improve their vocational counseling skills."²¹

In a position paper from the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) titled 'Counselor Preparation, Career Development/Career Education', 15 knowledge and competency areas were identified. ACES recommends that counselor education programs should emphasize these in their training programs.²²

Anita Mitchell synthesized needed competencies emerging for career development and classified them into the following seven categories:

1. Career Counseling Competencies - skills in using new assessment instruments and other techniques designed to stimulate client exploration of self and of possible options to relate specific occupational and educational decisions to life roles and total life style.
2. Program Planning Competencies - skills by which the counselor can team with other staff members to plan developmental, comprehensive career guidance programs that are integrated into the curriculum and are designed to include every student in the school or every client in the agency.
3. Implementation Competencies - skills to stimulate career development exploration; techniques for helping groups who have special needs; and the ability to deal with effects of cultural socialization on the career development of men and women.
4. Consultation Competencies - skills necessary for effective communication and cooperation with other staff members and with representatives of community agencies.
5. Linkage Competencies - skills necessary for advocating client needs and mechanisms to link them with various community agencies.

6. Staff Development Competencies - skills necessary for conducting workshops and mini-courses for staff members, parents, and other persons in areas appropriate to facilitating career development (e.g. planning, evaluation, information, etc.).
7. Evaluation Competencies - skills related to the design, carrying through, and reporting of the results of evaluations of career guidance programs.²³

The Pennsylvania School Counselors Association (PSCA) conducted a survey of on-the-job school counselors to determine the adequacy of their counselor preparation programs and experiences. Based on the responses of 175 Pennsylvania School Counselors who returned the questionnaires, the areas of weakest training - as reported in the January, 1984 issue of The Counselor - included Vocational Education Working With Agencies, Working With Minorities, Public Relations, and Parent Training. The strongest areas of preparation included: The Helping Relationship, Human Growth and Development, Communication Skills, and Group Counseling.²⁴

The Shippensburg University included in its final report information from the American School Counselors Association (ASCA).

One of the most extensive statements on Career Guidance was recently adopted by the American School Counselors Association in March, 1984, titled: 'The Role of the School Counselor in Career Guidance: Expectations and Responsibilities,' the statement addresses numerous career guidance skill areas that need to be developed if school counselors are to adequately function in a society of rapid technological change (ASCA Counselor, May, 1984). While the ASCA statement is too extensive for inclusion here, it does stress the importance of the school counselor's role in career guidance, and goes on to describe career guidance as a delivery system for enhancing student career development.²⁵

In response to the ASCA statement and the results of their questionnaire, the Pennsylvania Department of Education developed and implemented "Six Invitational Counselor Preparation Workshops for the Purpose of Improving and Updating Counselors' Skills and Competencies in the Areas of Career Development, Career Guidance and Career Education."²⁶

The workshops were held in October and November in six different geographic regions of the state, with synthesizing workshops held in May. Participants of the workshops included counselor education personnel, vocational-technical school counselors, employment counselors, rehabilitation counselors, and career planning specialists. The lists which generated the diverse group of counselors was a cooperative effort between the Department of Education, the Bureau of Job Services, and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. All counselor preparation institutions were invited to send two representatives - the department chair and the professor responsible for teaching the only career development/career guidance course required for all degrees in guidance and counseling.

The recommendations given at the completion of this project were:

1. Needed changes/improvements of counselor preparation programs. The general consensus of the changes and improvements that counselor education programs need is to provide opportunities to increase competencies in the areas of career development, career education, and career guidance. These recommendations were primarily directed toward pre-service counselors, however, the following sample of competencies would be beneficial to seasoned counselors as well. Some of the 27 competencies listed were: an understanding of the worker, worker motivation and the work environment; an understanding of the technological changes, their impact on society and employment, and their application to present and future career planning; skills designed to foster "self-help" approaches to career planning; skills in assessing career maturity, career decision-making readiness, and career information adequacy; and an understanding of the mission of area vocational-technical schools, their curricula, and the part they play in vocational preparation as well as career exploration.
2. A network collaboration approach to counselor preparation. Specific recommendations included:
 - * establish on-going regional and local networks,
 - * identify a regional organization to coordinate the network meetings,
 - * involve business, industry, and labor,
 - * develop close liaison with community agencies,

- * establish a written form of network communication - newsletter,
- * establish evaluation teams to monitor programs,
- * plan and implement better articulation activities, and
- * share work sites.

3. Recommendation for certification and professional development. The following recommendations were made:

- * link counselor - after the receipt of the masters degree - to a mandatory renewal process, thereby keeping the certification active;
- * issue professional certificates, continuing studies credits or academic credit to counselors;
- * encourage employers to grant professional release time to counselors in order to enhance their skills;
- * require that pre-service secondary school counselors have an internship, field experience, or practicum in an area vocational-technical school;
- * promote summer work for counselors within occupational settings; and
- * promote sabbaticals for counselors and intergrate them with counselor exchange programs.²⁷

The above three states have endeavored to make some changes in their guidance and counseling programs using very different aproaches. While Texas has used more types of guidance personnel, Maryland has chosen to expand the roles of the vocational counselor and change the emphasis to include strengthening decision-making skills and combining broad-based education with speciality skills. Pennsylvania's approach involved networking with counselors in all areas (vocational, school, rehabilitation), to generate discussion of changes that need to be made in the state's pre-service and in-service activities.

ONE STATEWIDE INNOVATIVE ENDEAVOR

In searching for innovative guidance and counseling programs the names, Norman Gysbers of the University of Missouri, and Marion Starr of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Missouri's Guidance Model kept coming to the foreground. In a phone conversation, Mr. Starr explained that the development of the Missouri Model has been a long process. Mr. Starr noted that counselors are performing too many non-guidance activities. As a result, Missouri is choosing to change the focus of guidance and counseling from a service to a program.²⁸ The "Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program Manual" states in the introduction that "public schools are at a critical point and that some priorities must change if our schools are to provide the education that will enable youth to fully function in society."²⁹

"Because of the need to refocus guidance activities and develop guidance within a 'programmatic framework,' the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education began to field test a proposed model for guidance in selected school districts during the 1984-85 school year. At that time twenty-two districts were designated to take part in the pilot project and during the 1985-86 school years, thirteen additional school districts participated. In subsequent years, additional school districts have been involved in implementing and refining the model. While it is a State Model, local districts have the flexibility to modify it to meet local needs."³⁰

The rationale for the Model Guidance Program was developed as a result of considering many statewide issues. Some of these issues include: 1) lack of guidance program efforts that reach 100% of the student population, 2) lack of a programmatic approach to guidance, 3) lack of accountability, 4) over abundance of non-guidance tasks that lead to counselor ineffectiveness, and 5) lack of criteria needed to address student

needs.³¹ The Guidance program itself includes guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support which speak to each of the issues just mentioned.³²

In order for districts to adopt this program, counselors and administrative staff are required to attend in-services over a two year funding cycle. The in-services involve two full days in the Fall and two full days in the Spring. Out of 500 school districts in Missouri, approximately 160 have adopted the program. The State Department of Education is now working to tie this program (i.e., the competencies, job responsibilities, etc.) into an accreditation system. A how-to manual has been developed explaining the program, defining new approaches and responsibilities, and organizing a step-by-step guide to program development and implementation. "The primary purpose of the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program Model is to help districts develop, implement, and evaluate comprehensive and systematic guidance programs."³³

NATIONAL ENDEAVORS

Research showed that national endeavors of guidance and counseling professionals included development of guidelines and/or curriculum that could be incorporated into the development and/or implementation of actual pre-service or in-service activities for guidance counselors. Other national activities involved coordination efforts to maintain open communication among state programs with similar goals.

The National Center for Research in Vocational Education

In 1985, The National Center for Research in Vocational Education in Columbus, Ohio, developed a series of 34 modules titled "Competency-Based Career Guidance Modules." The modules were divided into five major areas - planning, supporting, implementing, operating, and evaluating. Some examples of the competencies include: tutoring clients, providing for basic skills, conducting placement and reference activities, providing for employability skill development, as well as samples of planning (such as organizing a guidance program development team), collaborating with the community, and building a guidance program planning model. They include readings for each competency level within a subject area, learning experiences, evaluation guidelines, and references. These modules are available through the Vocational Education Services Library at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee

Another national endeavor is the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC). NOICC's mission is "to foster coordination and communication among these disparate groups (educational institutions at all levels, parents, counselors in schools and in public and private agencies, counseling associations, state career information delivery systems, the employment and training community, Job Service and Employment Security agencies, private employment agencies, libraries, welfare/social service agencies, and employers) representing both producers and users of occupational information."³⁴

"NOICC was established by Congress in 1976 to meet the occupational information needs of vocational education and employment and training programs managers, as well as individuals making career decisions."³⁵ Each state has a corresponding State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (SOICC). "By working with producers and users of occupational information NOICC and SOICCs seek to enhance the database of occupational information produced at the Federal and state level. The delivery modes for disseminating the database information include computers, tabloids, and audiovisual media. Finally the NOICC/SOICC network has taken a lead role, in cooperation with the counseling community, in efforts to strengthen counselor competencies and counselor programs through a National Career Development Guidelines project, and through the in-service and pre-service training provided by the Improve Career Decision Making (ICDM) program."³⁶

The National Career Development Guidelines project is a NOICC-sponsored project to establish national guidelines that states and educational institutions can use to develop comprehensive, competency-based career guidance and counseling programs. The publications, designed for kindergarten through adulthood, identify three essential components: 1) desired outcomes of comprehensive career guidance programs at the elementary, middle/junior high school, secondary, postsecondary and adult education levels; 2) qualifications and competencies needed by counselors to deliver quality programs; and 3) institutional capabilities necessary to provide good programs at each educational level.³⁷

NOICC has been actively engaged in training counselors in the use of labor market and occupational information through the Improve Career Decision Making (ICDM) program, which incorporates the counselor competencies outlined in the National Career Development Guidelines. The ICDM program targets both practicing counselors, through in-service workshops, and graduate counseling students, through pre-service seminars for counselor education faculty.³⁸

The ICDM training is offered through the SOICCs which conduct one to three day workshops covering up to 28 competencies. The workshops are conducted by teams of counselor educators, SOICC staff, career information delivery system representatives and labor market research and analysis staff within the state employment security agencies.³⁹

In a phone conversation with Mark Freidmeyer of the Indiana Department of Education, Mark added that these guidelines are not considered curriculum but rather ideas to act as a springboard for the development of programs. One strong advantage of the guidelines is that they encompass elementary through adult population needs.⁴⁶

The National Consortium of State Career Guidance Supervisors

The National Consortium of State Career Guidance Supervisors is a coalition of guidance representatives from participating states and territorial departments of education dedicated to enhancing career guidance and counseling, leadership, research, and dissemination in education. The Consortium's goal is to provide a framework for improving the effectiveness of elementary, secondary and postsecondary programs, counselor education, and supervision and administration of career guidance programs.

The objectives of the Consortium are as follows:

1. Provide a vehicle that brings states together to support mutual priorities, ongoing programs, and career development and prevocational services.
2. Promote the improvement and further development of career guidance at all levels of education.
3. Involve business, industry, and government in developing and evaluating quality career guidance programs.
4. Provide a structure through which to seek resources from public and private sources for program improvement and expansion.

5. Provide technical assistance to states in developing their annual and long-term plans related to career guidance and counseling.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper was to explore alternatives for developing quality career guidance and counseling programs. Before options were discussed, changes in terminology were examined. Because of changes in the workplace as a result of high technology, phrases such as work readiness, career maturity, and career adaptability are essential to the understanding of where a person is in the career decision-making process. The counselor must learn how to identify and measure readiness to learn, readiness to work, decision-making abilities of students, as well as provide occupational information. The process is more complicated because of the changing workplace. Workers can no longer count on having the same job responsibilities or task breakdown several years in a row. With the advent of technology came the necessity to employ workers willing to continue learning new skills as job tasks changed with technology.

Educators, particularly counselors, must learn and continue to explore ways of instilling this information into the minds of students and adults being retrained. A major concern is how well the counselor adjusts to the new demands to incorporate new activities, testing, and methods of reaching individuals in their already existing job responsibilities. In essence, what needs to happen is that counselors must try to practice what they are trying to instill in the minds of the individuals they are serving. They must be willing to be flexible, learn new skills, and work with professionals within the community to better

understand the workplace and how to present that information to young people and adults.

Another issue concerning counselors is the continued training of counselors in career guidance. This information presented in this paper should serve as a starting point for anyone interested in developing career guidance programs. The national career guidance modules and guidelines should provide the needed competencies to explore alternatives for developing actual professional development activities. An added advantage to the competencies already developed is that states, and even local programs can incorporate the completion of these competencies into a certification, merit, and promotional plan.

A larger scale response to this issue would be to develop a comprehensive guidance program that would consider every aspect of needed change: from student need to counselor responsibilities, school system dollars, and definitional changes in what a guidance and counseling program is within their system.

To make sure that the time, resources, and opportunity requirements are met, comprehensive guidance and counseling programs must be central to the delivery of vocational education now and in the future. Below are listed five basic premises from which comprehensive guidance and counseling programs in our schools and institutions can be developed and managed so that guidance personnel, together with their colleagues in vocational education, can fully assume their crucial role in responding to national challenges and individual and societal needs.

First, guidance is a program. As a program, it has characteristics similar to other programs in education and vocational education, including:

- a. learner competencies in such areas as self-knowledge and interpersonal relations, decision making and planning, and knowledge of life roles including worker and learner roles;
- b. activities and processes to assist learners to achieve competencies;
- c. professionally certified personnel; and
- d. materials and resources.

Second, guidance and counseling programs are developmental and comprehensive. They are developmental in that guidance activities must be conducted on a regular

and planned basis to assist young people and adults to achieve career development competencies. Guidance programs are comprehensive in that a full range of activities and services are provided including assessment, information, counseling, placement, follow-up, and follow-through.

Third, guidance programs focus on individuals' competencies, not their deficiencies. Problems and obstacles need to be identified and remediated, but they should not overshadow the existing or potential competencies of individuals. A major emphasis in guidance and counseling programs should be on helping individuals identify the competencies they already have plus assisting them to develop new competencies.

Fourth, guidance and counseling programs are built on a team approach. A comprehensive, developmental program is based on the assumption that all staff have teachers and administrators who have some guidance responsibilities rather than thinking it is all up to the counselors. At the same time, it should be understood that professionally certified counselors are central to the program. They provide direct services to individuals as well as work in consultive relationships with other members of the guidance team.

Fifth, guidance and counseling programs mandate articulation. A basic assumption underlying comprehensive developmental guidance programming is that there is an effective link between comprehensive high school guidance programs and those located in area vocational schools and postsecondary institutions. This means that there is program continuity, that those activities begun in comprehensive high school are carried on, as appropriate, in area vocational schools and postsecondary institutions. This means that the guidance staffs of these institutions meet together on a regular basis to exchange information and to update their programming as new student needs are identified.⁴¹

Sixth, fostering career development requires an ongoing effort in our schools. It also requires the implementation of a carefully integrated, multifaceted program that encompasses the totality of the educational enterprise. Educational renewal can, and should, begin with the infusion of a career development philosophy and matching concepts into educational programs.⁴²

Seventh, education and training is a lifelong process. Within the present climate of sharply rising unemployment, functional illiteracy, and rapid technological change, both vocational training and career counseling are critical elements to the process. They are mutually supportive. Vocational education teachers and other professionals in the education profession need to develop effective counseling techniques to meet the growing career needs of youth and adults.⁴³

With the above mentioned groups all working toward developing educational strategies and competencies while enhancing communication among counselors and those

professionals needing to listen to counselors, it seems that career guidance program planning falls within the jurisdiction of those individuals who can make decisions and begin making changes. It is hoped that this paper will stimulate ideas resulting in a directive study that will speak about the dilemma facing educators and employers in preparing youth for future employment and adults for career adjustments.

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